

Naming Rights/Sponsorship Opportunities for Washington State Ferries

Business Analysis Prepared by
TB-Rogstad Consulting, LLC
Presentation to the Washington State
Transportation Commission
October 20, 2009



Approach

- What do industry leaders in the Public Relations and Advertising Fields say?
- What are other transportation systems doing?
- What can be learned from WSF's current advertising contractor, Trans4Media, about their experience selling advertising space for the ferry service in the current market?

Key Findings

- Value associated with selling naming rights to a vessel driven by its assignment to a route.
- Little interest in merely buying the naming rights to a vessel.
- Combining space on high ridership routes, in an effort to sell sponsorships, has greater value.

Naming Rights falls under the Sponsorship Umbrella

Research

TBRC Spoke with:

DDB Seattle, Gogerty Marriott, Puget Sound Energy and
Verizon Wireless



Emerging Themes

- There is value, if done correctly.
- Approach as an innovative partnership effort, acknowledging a sponsors support for the system and the community
- Greater value in creating packages which combine advertising space on low ridership route with advertising space on high ridership routes
- Little desire or value in the mere selling of the actual name
- Revenue generated by a sponsorship program should be used in a way that directly benefits the ridership

Naming Rights/Sponsorship Concepts

- **Concept A Selling of the Right to Name the Vessel**
example- the M/V Corporation X
- **Concept B Selling of an Associated Brand Sponsorship** example- the M/V Illahee, powered by Corporation X
- **Concept C Selling of Brand Partnerships** ferries have traditional names and prominent advertising of a sponsor or sponsors would be placed throughout the vessel and even perhaps in terminals and on printed materials

Considerations

Vessel Assignment Plays a Role

Challenges and Expense associated with Naming and Renaming



Vessel Assignment Plays a Role

Advertisers are looking for maximum visibility

Port Townsend/Keystone route has significantly lower ridership and less visibility-this route accounts for about 3% of total ridership. This route provides little opportunity for maximizing advertising exposure.

However, vessels assigned to routes with higher ridership and more visibility might be more attractive to a Sponsor and have potential for higher revenue.

Opportunities exist if you package advertising space on lower ridership routes with space on well traveled routes

Challenges

Challenges with Naming and Renaming a Vessel

- Commercial Support Lacking
- Ferries Iconic/Negative comments from citizens
- Changing the name with any frequency brings additional expenses

registration required by USCG

expense to change the name on vessel and all safety equipment

Revenue Potential

Lack of Industry Comparables

Trans4Media 's Input



Revenue Potential

Industry Comparables

- New York Subway Station
200K per year
- Oklahoma River Ferries
2 million towards
construction of new ferries
- Seattle Street Car
Approximately 500K per
year for depot sponsorships

Trans4Media's Estimates

- Recommend Zone
Sponsorships or System
wide approach with
revenue projections
ranging from 100K to 10
Million per year

Recommendations

- Select the approach that allows for creative sponsorships as opposed to limiting it to selling just the name of a ferry vessel.
- Continue the tradition of using native/northwest names for all vessels or develop a naming process aligned with the current naming policy developed by the WSTC.
- Outside of revenue generation, there have been numerous ideas brought forth on naming of new vessels that are not within the scope of this report.

Recommendations Continued

- Provide direction and support for a program that aggressively pursues sponsorships for new and existing vessels and facilities system-wide.
- WSTC support and direction under the responsibility of naming facilities and/or public-private partnerships.
- Ensure that revenue generated from any sponsorship effort be earmarked for budgetary items that provide for direct passenger benefit.

Naming Rights Q & A

